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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8121
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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 001318

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/20/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UNGA](#) [CU](#) [EZ](#)
SUBJECT: CZECHS VIEWS ON AMENDMENT TO CUBA EMBARGO
RESOLUTION

REF: A. STATE 163498

[1](#)B. WARSAW 2222
[1](#)C. PRAGUE 1252

Classified By: Political and Economic Counselor Michael Dodman for reasons 1.4 b+d

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: The Czech Republic will support a proposed amendment to the UN resolution on the Cuba embargo that would highlight Cuban human rights abuses. They continue to question the wisdom of the move, and are certain that procedural concerns will prevent many countries who are sympathetic to the cause from speaking out in favor of the amendment. The Czech MFA has heard that the Dutch are considering having the EU issue a statement tied to the vote on the resolution that would include some of the language proposed for the amendment. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Pol-Econ Counselor met October 20 with Czech MFA UN Department Director Jan Kara to follow up on earlier discussion of an amendment to the annual UN Cuba embargo resolution that would include language addressing Cuban human rights violations (reftels). Kara confirmed that the Czech government would support such an amendment. We noted that the Poles were currently considering a U.S. request to formally sponsor the amendment, and that they would perhaps welcome a direct communication from the Czechs confirming that there would be other support for this move. Kara agreed that a phone call made sense and promised to discuss this further among colleagues at the ministry. Pol-Econ Counselor subsequently discussed this issue with the Acting Director of the Americas Department who agreed immediately to call the Polish MFA Americas Director to discuss. He also informed us that he had heard talk of a Dutch proposal to submit an "explanation of vote" to the certain EU vote in favor of the Cuba embargo resolution. This "explanation" would make reference to the human rights language the U.S. was seeking in the amendment, and could therefore offer a solution.

[1](#)3. (C) UN Director Kara, while noting that the Czechs were certainly on board in terms of the language in the amendment, nonetheless expressed concern about the amendment itself. He said he was certain that many UN members, including strong supporters of the U.S. position on human rights in Cuba, would vote against the proposed amendment on procedural grounds. He feared the result would be a "bad taste for many members" which could in the end hurt U.S. efforts. He repeated earlier statements that a resolution in the Third Committee on Cuban human rights would make more sense (although there was no guarantee of passage in that committee either). Kara went on to note, with noticeable disappointment, that the Czechs had been surprised that no other member states had been prepared to discuss the idea of the USG-proposed amendment when the Czech delegation raised

it in EU working groups (COHOM and CONUN) last week. He went so far as to question whether the USG had, in fact, raised this in other EU capitals. We assured him that the instruction had been sent to all capitals, and further explained that the USG had specifically reviewed the entire proposal with Presidency officials in Helsinki.

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